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RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 4896
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 0829
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL CALCUTTA PRIORITY 3019
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 1466
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 2344
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHMFISS/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KATHMANDU 000105

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [MARR](#) [UN](#) [IN](#) [NP](#)
SUBJECT: NEPAL: UN ARMS MONITORING BEGINS

Classified By: Ambassador James F. Moriarty. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

Arms Management Begins

11. (C) On January 17, Ian Martin's political advisor John Norris told the Deputy Chief of Mission that the UN arms monitoring team had begun the arms management process at the People's Liberation Army's (PLA) 3rd Division cantonment site in Chitwan District at around noon. The process began with the symbolic handing over of the "first weapon" and then registration of combatants began. According to Norris, the UN also planned to begin arms management at the 4th Division cantonment site in Nawalparasi District later in the day on January 17, as well as deliver an arms management logistical support package to the cantonment in Rolpa District on the same day.

Arms Management To Start Small, Without Much Publicity

12. (C) Norris had told the DCM earlier on January 12 that the UN would start with the 3rd and 4th Division sites. The UN wanted to make sure the process got off to a smooth start. The concern, he had said, was that starting simultaneously at all seven divisional sites would overwhelm the advance contingent of 35 arms monitors, some of whom had only just arrived in the country. He was optimistic, however, at the January 12 meeting that the process would go well. UNDP, for example, had brought in a group of personnel who had previously worked on arms management (combatant registration) in Afghanistan. The UN, he stated, did not intend to brief the press every day on progress but planned to provide selected photographs to a press pool. These would not include a picture of a Maoist handing in a weapon. The UN was very much aware of Maoist sensitivities of being portrayed publicly as a defeated army. Key countries such as the United States would be kept informed privately.

Some Issues Remain

13. (C) Norris had indicated January 12 that the work of the UN-chaired Joint Monitoring Coordinating Committee was going smoothly. The UN, Nepal Army and the Maoists had held their

sixth meeting earlier that day. Two satellite PLA cantonment sites had yet to be agreed upon, but he was confident that would happen soon. Norris reported that his biggest concern was that the Government of Nepal (GON) did not yet have a sense of urgency about handling camp infrastructure. The GON needed to meet its responsibilities to provide shelter, water and other utilities. In response to Emboff's criticism that the Maoists had already received more than USD 4 million which had not been accounted for, Norris reiterated that the GON bore primary responsibility for the mess in the camps.

Political Leaders Positive, but Frustrated

¶4. (C) Political leaders agreed January 18 that the beginning of UN arms management was a positive development. Jhalanath Khanal, a newly-appointed MP from the Communist Party of Nepal-United Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML) said that, although it was a good start, the UN team was working too slowly. Arjun Narsingh KC, Central Committee Member of the Nepali Congress (NC), said that he was not happy with the progress of UN arms monitoring and that it needed to happen faster to be effective. KC stressed the importance of waiting until arms management was complete before allowing the Maoists into an interim government, but worried that the Prime Minister would let the Maoists in very soon, before arms management was done.

Comment

¶5. (C) Arjun Narsingh KC's concerns have some validity given recent history. As recently as January 8, the Seven

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Party-Alliance and the Maoists had agreed that the interim constitution would not be promulgated and the interim parliament established until UN arms monitoring had begun in earnest. In the end, Prime Minister Koirala felt compelled to go ahead with the constitution and parliament two days before UN arms monitoring began (although in the PM's defense the UN had been saying that arms management would begin on January 15). He will face similar pressure from the Maoists as well as members of his own governing coalition to induct Maoists into an interim government before the arms management process is complete. The Governments of India and the United States have both made it clear through public statements in Kathmandu in recent days that there should be no interim government until a credible arms management process is complete. We will continue to urge Prime Minister Koirala, who reaffirmed that position to the Ambassador on January 17, to hold to that line. We will also push Ian Martin and his team to conduct a thorough and credible arms management process and to speak clearly if Maoist participation in the arms management process turns out to be a sham.

MORIARTY